

Embassy Notice on Travel Security in Malaysia
November 26, 2009

As the holiday season approaches, we know that many U.S. citizens will be traveling in and around Malaysia. The Embassy wants to take this opportunity to reiterate our guidance on security threats in the region we think you should consider when making your plans.

The Department of State remains concerned about the possibility of terrorist attacks against U.S. citizens in Southeast Asia. Extremist groups in the region have demonstrated the capability to carry out attacks in locations where Westerners congregate, and these groups do not distinguish between civilian and official targets. The U.S. Government has designated two such groups, Jemaah Islamiyah (JI) and the Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG) as Foreign Terrorist Organizations. JI, which has a known presence in Malaysia, is linked to al-Qaeda and other regional terrorist groups and has cells operating throughout Southeast Asia.

There are indications that both criminal and terrorist groups continue to plan acts of violence against foreigners. The July 17, 2009, attack in Indonesia serves as a reminder that terrorists retain the intent and capability to attack Western targets in the region, although the Government of Malaysia and other regional governments have also increased their ability to detect, deter, and prevent attacks. The most recent incident involving U.S. citizens in Malaysia occurred in 2000, and the most recent incident involving other foreigners occurred in 2003. The ASG, based in the southern Philippines, has kidnapped foreigners in Malaysia. Criminal elements are also responsible for kidnapping and piracy committed against foreigners. These acts of violence have occurred in the eastern islands and coastal areas of the state of Sabah, closest to the maritime border with the Philippines.

For these reasons, the Department of State urges U.S. citizens to evaluate carefully the risks of travel to the eastern islands and coastal areas of the state of Sabah. U.S. citizens who wish to visit these areas should exercise caution, remain alert to their surroundings, and use good personal security measures. Also, U.S. citizens who travel overland from Malaysia to Thailand should be aware of the Department of State's safety and security information for Thailand, and in particular for the several Thai provinces bordering Malaysia.

U.S. citizens traveling abroad should regularly monitor the [Embassy's website \(http://malaysia.usembassy.gov\)](http://malaysia.usembassy.gov), and the U.S. Department of State's [Bureau of Consular Affairs' website \(www.travel.state.gov\)](http://www.travel.state.gov), where the current Worldwide Caution, Travel Warnings, Travel Alerts, and Country Specific Information can be found. The U.S. Embassy also encourages U.S. citizens to review "[A Safe Trip Abroad](http://travel.state.gov/travel/tips/safety/safety_1747.html)" (http://travel.state.gov/travel/tips/safety/safety_1747.html), which includes valuable security information for those living and traveling abroad. In addition to information on the Internet, travelers may obtain up-to-date information on security conditions by calling 1-888-407-4747 toll-free in the U.S. and Canada, or outside the U.S. and Canada on a regular toll line at 1-202-501-4444.

U.S. citizens living or traveling in Malaysia are encouraged to register with the U.S. Embassy through the [State Department's travel registration website, \(https://travelregistration.state.gov/ibrs/ui/\)](https://travelregistration.state.gov/ibrs/ui/).

Registration allows us to contact you in an emergency and provide updated information on travel and security. U.S. citizens without Internet access may register directly with the Embassy. The U.S. Embassy is located at 376 Jalan Tun Razak, 50400 Kuala Lumpur and can be contacted at:

Phone (24/7): 03-2168-5000

Fax: 03-2148-5801
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